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DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



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TO: Natural Resources Commission
Department of Natural Resources Management Team

FROM: Trevor VanDyke, Director, Legislative & Legal Affairs Office

SUBJECT: Department of Natural Resources Legislative Update

PA 407 of 2014 (HB 5226) – Expands Crop Damage Permits to Include Bear– Rep. McBroom

This new act amends Section 40114 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to include bear as a species for which a crop damage permit can be issued. The new act establishes specific deadlines for responding to a request for a permit and also requires that only a person with a valid bear hunting license shall be allowed to shoot the nuisance bear.

PA's 537 – 541 (SB's 795-797 & 799-800) – Increases Penalties for Prohibited Species Violations and Adds Additional Prohibited Species – Sen's. Kowall, Meekhof, Pavlov, Green, Casperson, Walker, Moolenaar, and Hansen

These new acts amend various sections of the Michigan Compiled Laws to increase penalties for violations of introduction of prohibited, restricted, genetically engineered or nonnative aquatic species and also include “insect” and “aquatic plant” in the prohibited list, and also provides for additional criminal penalties, forfeiture of property, suspension or revocation of licenses or permits.

PA 549 (HB 5563) – Creates a Disposal Process for Abandoned Vessels, ORVs and Snowmobiles – Rep. LaFontaine

This new act amends the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to create a process for the disposal of abandoned vessels, ORVs and snowmobiles.

PA 566 (HB 5141) – Provides for a Transfer of State-Owned Property to Kent County – Rep. Peter MacGregor

This new act authorizes the Department of Natural Resources to convey property located in Plainfield Township to Kent County and specifies that the lands must remain open for public recreation purposes.

PA 571 (HB 5952) – Removes the Use Restriction on Property Conveyed to Commerce Township – Rep. Kesto

This new act amends the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to authorize the Department to receive and then convey property in Commerce Township for the development of a township library.

SB 78 – Prohibits the Designation of Biodiversity Areas – Sen. Casperson

This bill seeks to amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to prohibit the DNR and the NRC from promulgating or enforcing a rule or order that designates or classifies an area of land, specifically for the purpose of achieving or maintain biological diversity. The bill also eliminates the conservation of biological diversity from the DNR's duties regarding forest management, and requires the DNR to balance its management activities with economic values.

- This bill was vetoed by the Governor.

SBs 926 & 927 – Prohibits the Use of Aerial Drones for the Taking of Game – Sen's. Casperson and Pavlov

These bills seek to amend Sections 40102, 40111c, and 40112 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to prohibit the use of drones for the taking game or to interfere with or harass another individual who is hunting.

- While SB 927 was passed by both chambers, the amendments to the House substitute of SB 926 were re-returned from the Senate and not voted on by the House and therefore did not pass the House. Given that SB 926 and SB 927 were tie barred, SB 927 was vetoed by the Governor.

If you would like to learn more about these and other bills, you can access the Michigan Legislature website at www.legislature.mi.gov.